

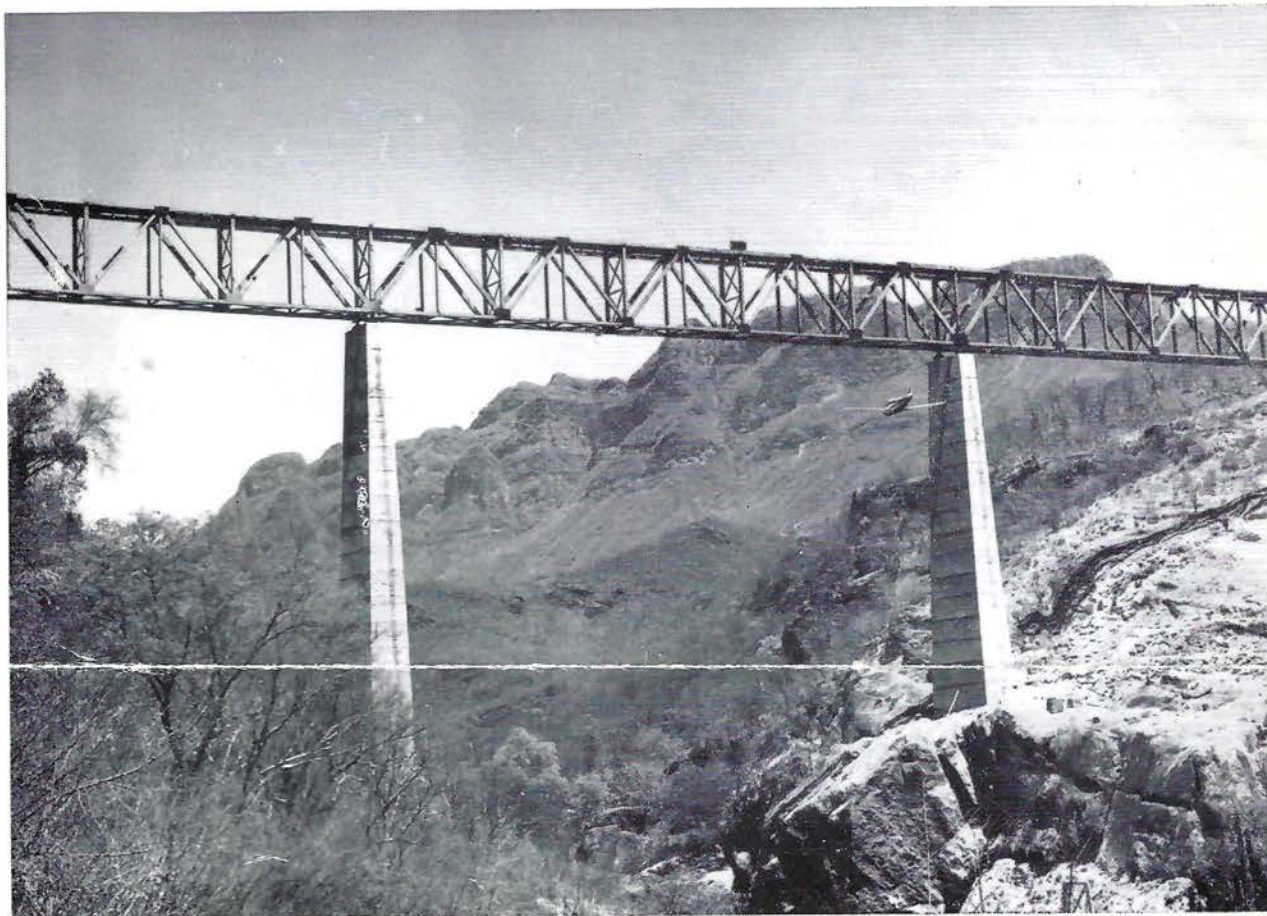
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A spectacular bridge on the Chihuahua - Pacific Railway.

Mexicans as Builders

FROM the aqueducts of the poet-king Netzahualcoyotl to the dams and railways of to-day, Mexicans have always been builders. Their engineering has often the élan of art, as if this enormous land were looked upon as a pliable block of raw material to be shaped almost for the fun of it.

Two of the most important present-day engineering feats are the new Chihuahua-Pacific Railway, and the great Infiernillo dam which it is said will be the largest in Latin America. Before the opening of the railway last year, I travelled down it from Chihuahua to Los Mochis on open workmen's trucks. The most spectacular part of the line is between the little mining town of Creel and the village of San Pedro 150 miles to the south-west. Here the land drops from 8,000 feet to 400 feet, and only the brilliant tracing of the route by the Mexican brothers Francisco and Ramón Tognó allowed for the smoothly curving railway that exists to-day.

The railway runs through wild country, slashed barrancas inhabited by Tarahumara Indians, some of whom worked on the line. Suddenly, though, one comes upon gentle valleys loaded with apple, to show the potentialities of the region. Indeed, this new railway (criticised by theoreticians who believe that such a method of transport has become obsolete) will open up Mexico's north-west to mining, agriculture and tourism. The port of Topolobampo is to-day a fishing centre with a flourishing fruit and vegetable cannery supplied from the hinterlands. The railway should give this beautiful little port a further impetus; and indeed Mexico is undaunted by criticism and has already begun the rehabilitation of the line extending from Mexico City to Balsas, which will be extended to reach the pleasure resort of Acapulco. The brothers Togno are responsible for the tracing of this line, too.

The Mexico City-Acapulco line will have importance for the whole area of the Balsas-Tepalcatepec river basin, where the Infiernillo dam is now being built. This is an almost completely undeveloped and depopulated region: a jagged landscape of mountain and mostly desert plain, with some rice paddies and poor-grade cotton edging the Tepalcatepec.

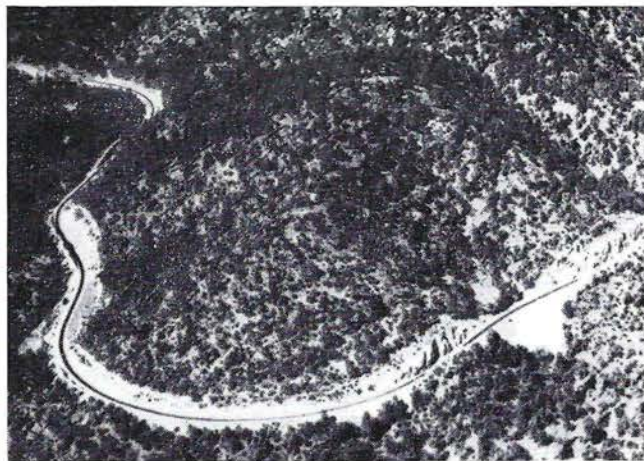
The site of the dam, to which I flew recently with Señor Manuel Moreno Torres, head of the Federal Electricity Commission, is at the lower end of a 62-mile long defile which will become a reservoir twice the size of Mexico's biggest natural lake, Chapala. The Infiernillo reservoir will also extend about 30 miles along the more open valley of the Tepalcatepec. Altogether 494,000 acres of land will be flooded, but the population is so sparse that only about a dozen small villages will have to be removed from the lake floor.

The electric plant, which is being tunnelled into the mountain for better protection, is as deep as a twelve-storey building. It will have 600,000 kv. capacity to feed Mexico City 200 miles to the east. This £28.6 million complex is being financed from France and will have French equipment, but all the engineering and testing for the dam itself has been done in Mexico, in conjunction with the firm Ingenieros Civiles Asociados, who were also contractors on the Chihuahua-Pacific Railway and who work on a large proportion of government projects.

The Infiernillo dam is not intended for irrigation, which will be left to another dam, downstream at a point called La Villita, where there are 30,000 hectares of promising Pacific coast land to be developed agriculturally. It is La Villita, too, that will supply power for the steel works projected by General Lázaro Cárdenas at Las Truchas.

So Mexico is opening up its north-west, its "deep south," and other areas of the country where potential resources have scarcely yet been tapped. Mexican engineers are building for the future, and Netzahualcoyotl would be proud to discover that he has successors to-day.

H.M. Queen Elizabeth II was graciously pleased to receive H.E. The Ambassador of Mexico, Señor Don Antonio Armendáriz, at Buckingham Palace on May



Aerial scene showing curves of the Chihuahua-Pacific Railway.

22nd, when His Excellency in the name of the Government and people of Mexico, presented her with a case—made of an amalgam of silver, gold, jade and other metals—containing a collection of fifteen gold coins and medals, the first of which, value eight escudos, was issued in 1858 by President Juarez. The last one is the gold medal issued by the Bank of Mexico on the occasion of the first centenary of the battle of May 5th, 1862, won by the Mexicans in Puebla, whose valour Commander Hugh Dunlop, British Plenipotentiary at the time, praised in his reports to the Admiralty.

Talk by Dr. Catharine Gavin

On Tuesday, 26th June, in the presence of H.E. The Mexican Ambassador, the well-known writer, Dr. Catherine Gavin, gave a most interesting talk to members on "The Novelist's Mexico."

Dr. Gavin is the author of "The Cactus and the Crown,"* a recently-published historical novel set in Mexico and written with a great knowledge of, and sympathy with, that country.

* Published by Hodder & Stoughton.

International Educational Building Conference

Three delegates from Mexico were among the many who attended this Conference, which took place from 25th July to 2nd August. At a reception given for them at Canning House, they expressed their great pleasure at the decision taken to hold the next Conference, in 1963, in Mexico City.

Exhibition of Mexican Codices

During the International Congress of Hispanists, to be held in Oxford from 6th to 11th September, a number of Mexican Codices will be on view in the Taylor Institution.

News from Mexico . . .

President Kennedy's Visit to Mexico in July

President John F. Kennedy and Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy paid a state visit to Mexico from June 29th to July 1st and the reception given to them by the Mexican people turned out to be the warmest and most enthusiastic welcome demonstration ever accorded any foreign statesman. A crowd estimated by Life magazine of close to two million flag-waving, viva-shouting Mexicans of all sectors of society lined Kennedy's ten-mile route from the airport to Los Pinos palace including mariachi bands, folklore dancers and charro groups. As the motorcade moved through the centre of the town it was virtually buried in a blizzard of confetti even exceeding a New York ticker-tape parade, and at several points thousands of coloured toy balloons were sent sailing. White House Press-Secretary, Pierre Salinger, told newsmen that "this reception beats anything we have ever run into."

Below are some of the principal points from the Joint Declaration made by President Lopez Mateos and President Kennedy.

Both Presidents reaffirmed the dedication of their countries to the ideals of individual liberty and personal dignity which constitute the foundation of a civilisation which they share in common. In consonance with their dedication to these ideals and acting always as sovereign and independent countries, which decide their own policies and their own courses of action, they propose to respect and maintain the principles of non-intervention—whether this intervention may come from a continental or extra-continental state—and of self-determination of peoples.

Both Presidents fully accept the responsibility of every sovereign nation to form its own policies, without outside dictation or coercion.

President Kennedy recognised that the fundamental goal of the Mexican revolution is the same as that of the Alliance for Progress—social justice and economic progress within the framework of individual freedom and political liberty.

The two Chiefs of State concurred in the need for intensifying the efforts which are being made through the various international organisations including the United Nations, the Inter-American system, and the European Economic Community to achieve expanding levels of trade, with special attention to the elimination of discriminatory and restrictive practices against exports of basic commodities from Latin America. They agreed that it is indispensable that a broadened and more stable market should be provided in order to improve the income of the exporting countries. Of such income, workers and farmers should have an equitable share to permit increases in their levels of living. Cotton, coffee, sugar and metals were the subject of special discussion.

The two Presidents discussed the problem of Chamizal. They agreed to instruct their Executive agencies to recommend a complete solution to this problem which without prejudice to their juridical position takes into account the entire history of this tract in relation to the problem of salinity of the waters of the Colorado river.



Torre Latina Americana, Mexico City.

They expressed their determination, with the scientific studies as a basis, to reach a permanent and effective solution at the earliest possible time with the aim of preventing the recurrence of this problem after October 1963.

The Presidents finished their conversations by emphasising their determination that, whatever temporary difficulties may at times arise between Mexico and the United States, the two Governments should resolve them in a spirit of close friendship inasmuch as they are fundamentally united in defence of those values of liberty and personal dignity which their revolutionary ancestors struggled to establish.

The two Presidents discussed the studies which have been conducted by scientists of the two countries.

The two Presidents noted that water which the United States plans to release during the winter of 1962-63 for river regulation and such other measures as may be immediately feasible should have the beneficial effect of reducing the salinity of the waters until October 1963.

On 12th July a businessmen's group was organised in Mexico with the object of fostering financial and trade relations between Mexico and Great Britain.

This group is headed by Señor Edmundo Stierle, and has among its members outstanding figures in banking, industry and trade in Mexico.

We also understand that in Great Britain an important group of bankers, industrialists and businessmen is being organised, inspired by the same aim of increasing economic and financial relations between Great Britain and Mexico.

The old-established Mexican firm of Clemente Jacques, S.A., which produces amongst many other attractive goods, a wide variety of Mexican national dishes, has arranged for Alfredo Bouret Ltd. to represent it in the United Kingdom. Many excellent items as, for example, tamales, moles, stuffed chillis, and such delicacies as tender cactus bits and agave worms, will soon be obtainable from leading stores in London and other cities.

Considerable interest has been aroused on the forthcoming inauguration, in September, of the first store in Europe specialising exclusively in Mexican art goods and other typical manufactures from our country. This store will be appropriately named "Mexicana" and will be of particular interest to the wholesale trade in the United Kingdom although it will also handle a retail department.

Tequila, which was introduced to the British market two months ago, is enjoying increasing demand, report its importers, E. Roche & Co. Ltd., whose chain of shops throughout London and other cities are selling this most famous of Mexican spirits.

"MEXICO! NOT TO VISIT MEXICO IS NOT TO KNOW THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE." — Lord Bossom of Maidstone in his book "An Architectural Pilgrimage in Old Mexico."

Routes and Fares: Mexico City is four hours' journey by air from New York. Return fares from London via New York are: £401 17s. first class and £243 15s. economy class, with excursion fares of £223 9s. and £209 6s. in economy class according to the season. By sea the journey is complicated and difficult.

Formalities: Smallpox vaccination is obligatory. No visa is needed, but a tourist card must be obtained and various forms filled in. A deposit of £150 may be asked for.

Accommodation: There are numerous *pensions* and hotels charging from 10s. a day for room only to £7

a day with all meals. Air-conditioned hotels charge £4 a day and upwards.

Information: The Mexican Consulate-General, 48 Montrose Place, London, S.W.1.

Señor Lic. Don Miguel Alemán, ex-President of Mexico and now Chairman of the National Tourist Council, was in Glasgow and London early in August to establish the necessary relations for the purpose of fostering tourism between the two countries, by sea and by air.

Fairs and Shows to be held in Mexico this year

Exhibition of shoes and machinery for their manufacture. Hotel del Prado, Mexico, D.F. In the autumn.

Dress Fair. Hotel del Prado, Mexico, D.F. In the autumn.

Grand Agricultural, Cattle, Industrial and Commercial Show. C. Victoria, Tamps. 20th-28th October.

Grape Fair. Aguascalientes. Month of August.

Grape Fair. Parras de la Fuente, Coah. Month of August.

Industrial, Commercial, Agricultural and Cattle Show. Pachuca, Hgo. Month of August.

Grand Christmas Show. Queretaro, Qro. 12th-30th December.

Industrial, Commercial, Agricultural and Cattle Fair. Zacatecas, Zac. 4th-8th October.

Potato, Agricultural, Cattle, Industrial, Commercial and Cultural Show. C. Serdan, Pue. 26th-31st August.

National Silver Fair. Taxco, Gro. 27th November-5th December.

Industrial, Commercial, Cattle, Agricultural and Orange Fair. Montemorelos, N.L. 15th-30th November.

"MEXICO CONSTRUCTS" Travelling Exhibition. Various States of the Republic.

New Members of the Society

Mr. William Brain, F.Z.S.

Mrs. L. Dobson.

Mr. Howard A. Wormleighton, T.D.